

**Dr. Peterson**

**Welcome: Family Weekend Southern Social**

5-6:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 12, 2014, Scheller College of Business Atrium

Good morning, and welcome to the Family Weekend Southern Social. This is always one of the most enjoyable times of the year for Val and me. We get to mix and mingle with people who are the heart and soul of Georgia Tech. And as parents and families, you have opportunities to learn, socialize, enjoy good food, take in a college football game in one of the country's best game-day atmospheres, and grow a little closer to this great institution.

We're very grateful to those of you have so generous in your support of Georgia Tech and our Parents Fund for Student Life & Leadership. You'll hear more about that later, but I just wanted to add my voice to support the wonderful work our Parents Advisory Board has been doing under the leadership of our Board Chairs, Suzanne and Scott Doll. You'll get to hear from them in just a minute.

Our focus, as it must be, is on the almost 22,000 students who come to us and expect to be challenged. We have in common with all you parents a similar goal: We're working very hard to prepare these young people for their next step in life. If, like you, we do our job right, they will leave this nest ready for the next chapter in their lives. You have sent us the most precious thing you have, and we try to keep that in mind in every decision we make.

When your sons and daughters leave home to attend Georgia Tech, for many of them it's the first time they've been away from mom and dad in an extended way. You come to see them on occasions like this and other visits, but you're not physically nearby as you have been most of their lives. But believe me, they carry you with them. They still look up to you, need your support, and strive to live up to your expectations. You are an integral part of this Institution, and the role you play in your student's life is extremely impactful.

This Family Weekend is a wonderful opportunity to come to campus and get involved with Georgia Tech, but I hope you won't limit yourself only to special occasions like this. I encourage you to become involved with our Parents Association — take part in events, come to games, or even take one of our Massive Open Online Courses ... MOOCs, as we call them. Please, don't be a stranger.

Introduce Mrs. Valerie H. Peterson.

Introduce the 2014-2015 Parents Advisory Board Chairs, Suzanne and Scott Doll (*parents of Ryan Doll, 4th-year student*) from Alpharetta.